

REMARKS

By this paper, claims 24 and 25 have been amended. Claims 24-32 are pending.

In the outstanding Office action dated May 28, 2004, claims 24-28 and 30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Reydel et al. (2001/0044595). Additionally, claims 29, 31 and 32 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the Reydel et al. Publication. In rejecting the claims, among other things, the Examiner characterized the sleeve 13 of Reydel et al. as a sheath and the elongate member 12 of Reydel et al. as embodying structure to separate first and second medical devices. The Applicant respectfully traverses the rejections of the claims.

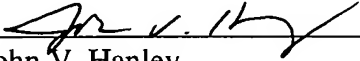
Independent claims 24 has been amended to recite a sheath extending substantially along the length of an elongate member and overlaying the structure to separate a first medical device from a second medical device. Significantly, the Reydel et al. Publication does not teach such structure. In fact, the Reydel et al. Publication lacks the disclosure of a sheath extending along substantially the length of an elongate member and further lacks a sheath that overlays structure to separate a first medical device from a second medical device. Clearly, neither the introducer 12 nor the sleeve 13 of Reydel et al. define a sheath extending along substantially the length of the recited elongate member and overlaying structure to separate a first medical device from a second medical device. Rather, the sleeve 13 extends only a short distance along the disclosed introducer apparatus 10 and the introducer 12 is characterized by the Examiner as including structure separating first and second medical device and thus the introducer 12 cannot also overlay such structure. Therefore, it is believed that each of the pending claims now recite patentable subject matter.

CONCLUSION

Applicant has attempted to respond to each and every rejection set forth in the outstanding Office Action. In view of the above remarks, Applicant respectfully requests that the application be reconsidered, the claims allowed and the application passed to issue.

Respectfully submitted,

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